



Blueprints for Belief

Laying the Theological Foundations for Constructing Your Faith

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4. These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

5. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

7. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extends or withholds mercy, as he pleases, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.

8. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men, attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.

Summary of Doctrine

Specific Atonement

The number of the saved is established by God.

Unconditional Election

God's election is not based on anything foreseen in people, such as faith or works, but solely on His free grace and sovereign will.

Salvation

All the aspects and benefits of salvation follow election and are only given to the elect. God ordains the means as well as the ends.

Reprobation

God has also sovereignly passed over others, ordaining them to just condemnation for their sins, to display His justice.

Practical Implications

Although God's decree is fixed, He accomplishes it through ordinary means, and it must not lead to careless living or fatalism. Instead, it should lead to assurance, worship, obedience, and humility.

Scripture References

- **Ephesians 1:4-5** – *“Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world... he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”*
- **Romans 8:30** – *“And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”*
- **Romans 9:22** – *“What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?”*
- **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14** – *“God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel...”*
- **2 Peter 1:10** – *“Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.”*

Last time, we looked at the following objections, which still apply here:

Objection 1: *“If God ordains everything, then He must be the author of sin.”*

Objection 2: *“If everything is already determined, human choices don't matter.”*

Objection 3: *“Election makes God unfair.”*

Objection 4: *“If some are predestined to condemnation, God must be cruel.”*

Objection 5: *“This doctrine kills evangelism and prayer.”*

Tonight, we will add two more:

Objection 6: *“Predestination causes fear or despair. People may worry they're not elect and live in anxiety rather than assurance.”*

- **Response:** The doctrine is meant to comfort believers (WCF 3.8), not unsettle them. Those who trust in Christ are among the elect (John 6:37; Rom 8:1). Assurance comes not from peering into God's secret will, but from trusting His promises and seeing fruit (2 Pet 1:10; 1 John 5:13).

Objection 7: *“Doctrines like predestination may be a source of pride and arrogance.”*

- **Response:** If rightly understood, predestination should produce the opposite of pride—it should humble us. The doctrine teaches that we contributed nothing to our salvation except the sin that made it necessary. God didn't choose us because we were smarter, more spiritual, or more deserving. He chose us solely out of His mercy and grace (Eph. 2:8-9). That leaves no room for boasting—only worship and gratitude. If someone uses predestination to feel superior to others, they're not embracing the doctrine—they're abusing it. Election doesn't puff us up; it puts us on our knees.
- *“The effect of Calvinism, when truly grasped, is to lay us in the dust and to exalt the Lord Jesus.”* – Bruce Milne, **“The Practical Implications of Calvinism”**